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SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE NEWS



REGION 4

Comprising States of Louisiana, Arkansas,
Oklahoma and Texas, except High Plains Area

REGIONAL OFFICE--FORT WORTH, TEXAS

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CHIEF BENNETT VISITS IN REGION 4

Dr. H. H. Bennett, Chief of the Soil Conservation Service, attended the annual meeting of the Soil Science Society of America in New Orleans November 22-24 and on December 2 spoke to a large number of Oklahomans who assembled at Eufaula. The Oklahoma meeting was sponsored by the McIntosh County Soil Conservation District.

In New Orleans, Dr. Bennett spoke at the sessions of the Society and made a radio talk from Station WWL.

Dealing with the subject: "Anchoring Oklahoma's Land," Dr. Bennett said at Eufaula:

"In my opinion this meeting is important for more than one reason. We have here more than a soil conservation district making progress toward the preservation of the community's basic asset--the soil. We have here more than a concentration of conservation forces. Most important of all, I believe, is the spirit of the meeting itself.

"Because you are a part of it you may not quickly realize that this meeting is symbolic of one of the most rapid and almost spectacular changes in the public frame of mind this country has ever witnessed. Ten years ago, or even five years ago, such a meeting as this probably couldn't have taken place. A discussion of soil conservation probably wouldn't have brought out more than two or three curious people.

"But think how our attitude is changing. And further, notice where it is changing most rapidly and most thoroughly. Just a little more than three years ago I spoke at Stillwater. At that meeting, I pointed out that 13 million of the 16 million acres in cultivation in Oklahoma was already suffering seriously from erosion and that half of this land had reached the stage of gullying. I called it an 'appalling' waste. It was appalling not only because of its extent, but because it had taken place so quickly and in such a new state.

"The same description of erosion in Oklahoma applies today. Millions of tons of rich soil have been washed and blown from your fields and pastures. This soil is gone forever. It probably will take nature hundreds of years to build back new soil, even with your help.

"The monumental and all-important fact to consider, however, is that you and farmers all over the state are helping. You are not only helping nature build new soil to replace that which has vanished, but you are taking practical steps to see that the precious soil still remaining stays where it belongs.

"All this is the result of a new attitude toward the land. With new knowledge about the soil and the need for conservation measures to maintain it, you have decided to do something about the erosion problem. In a state which not long ago was well on the way toward becoming an outstanding example of erosion's devastation, the people are doing a complete about face. Oklahoma today is one of the states leading the nation in the fight for conservation of basic resources and the establishment of a permanent agriculture.

"That is why I say that this meeting represents something more than the progress of a single conservation district. In a sense it may also be described as a symbol--the symbol of a new revolution in the United States which may overthrow the forces of exploitation and replace them with the forces of conservation. It is only by the multiplication of the activities of just such soil conservation districts as the McIntosh County district, and by the enlistment of all available forces, that we will accomplish our objectives.

"Here in Oklahoma, active, energetic, far sighted farmers have organized 31 soil conservation districts covering more than 15 million acres. In this respect, Oklahoma is leading the nation. Oklahoma has almost twice as many districts as any other state. But farmers in other parts of the nation are moving ahead steadily. By the 15th of November, 21⁴ districts had been organized by farmers in 26 states, including Oklahoma, and the total area included in districts amounted to 116,893,464 acres.

"This is a beginning, but as you will readily see, it is only a beginning. There are more than a billion acres of land in the United States now eroding, or subject to erosion in the future if mishandled. In Oklahoma, alone, approximately 30 per cent of the land has been ruined or severely impoverished by erosion. And in addition, 48 percent has been damaged to

some extent. That is why we must not rest on the advances we have made thus far. The big job is still out ahead. It is a job in which each farmer has a personal interest and a public responsibility.

"As we all know the soil resource of this country was developed over thousands of years. It was not manufactured in a year, a month or a day. When we lose what we now have, we cannot turn on a piece of machinery and make some more. That is why the ownership and use of land must be regarded as a special type of ownership and use. The same land we are using today must be there to serve those who come after us. It is our responsibility to see to it that our children and our children's children, receive their source of life in as good condition, or even in a better condition, than it is now. While it is eminently worthwhile to conserve the soil and maintain its productivity for our own use right now, we also have a public responsibility to consider.

"The fight to conserve our land is at the same time a fight for the future welfare of mankind. When soil washes down the slopes, down the streams, down to the wastes of the oceans, so goes opportunity, security and the chance for men to make a living from the land."

-SCS-

NEW WATER FACILITIES PROJECT TO BE ESTABLISHED IN OKLAHOMA

The establishment of a Water Facilities Project in the 1,187,000-acre Cache Creek drainage basin in southwestern Oklahoma to assist farmers in the intensive development of water resources for livestock and other farm needs was announced in December by the Department of Agriculture.

The area includes those parts of Kiowa, Caddo, Comanche, Tillman, and Cotton Counties which lie within the drainage basin of Cache Creek, Deep Red, West Cache, and East Cache Creeks.

Under the water facilities program, dams will be constructed and springs developed in an effort to attain greater economic stability for the livestock industry in the area. Farmers receiving assistance will cooperate by adopting land-use plans which provide moisture conservation and control of soil erosion.

When loans are needed to carry out the work or to repay the government for the cost of constructing and installing the necessary facilities, such loans will be advanced by the Department on a long-term basis.

-SCS-

OPERATIONS WORK TO START IN OKLAHOMA DISTRICTS

Limited operations work will be started in two new Oklahoma soil conservation districts in the near future through assistance furnished by Soil Conservation Service personnel stationed at established work units.

The new districts to receive assistance are:

Arbuckle Soil Conservation District, with an area of 784,640 acres covering all of Carter County and part of Johnston County. Personnel from the Tulip and Henry House Creeks demonstration project with headquarters at Ardmore will assist farmers in the new project.

Little River Soil Conservation District, which includes an area of 483,840 acres covering a part of McCurtain County. Personnel of the Idabel CCC camp will assist in this district.

In the 19 soil conservation districts already operating in Oklahoma, 3,916 farmers have applied to their district supervisors for assistance in conserving their resources of soil, water, timber and wildlife. Leo S. Wortman, state coordinator for the Soil Conservation Service in Oklahoma, reported on December 1 that 1,436 farmers owning 252,934 acres had entered into agreement with the districts. In addition, 295 farm plans covering 56,993 acres were being prepared. Fifty-three previously drafted plans, for 7,699 acres, had been presented to the farmers for signature.

Conservation surveys have been completed on 2,841,860 acres on the first of this month in the Oklahoma districts.

The 46 educational meetings held in Oklahoma in November drew an attendance of 2,167 persons. In addition, eight meetings were held with a total of 212 farmers to discuss planning and program execution.

The reports from the Oklahoma districts:

District	Requests for Assistance	Farms Under Agreement	Acres Under Agreement
Arkansas-Verdigris	390	178	27,581
Garvin-Murray	382	116	19,766
McIntosh County	299	120	20,554
Upper Washita	267	130	34,709
Kiamichi	274	100	15,653
Konawa	390	143	18,190
East Central	393	189	25,186
North Fork of Red River	221	103	21,226
Cottonwood Creek	104	35	5,928
Stephens County	223	83	20,333
Farm Security	202	34	7,708
Jackson County	182	43	8,637

Reports from Oklahoma districts continued:

District	Requests for Assistance	Farms Under Agreement	Acres Under Agreement
Canadian-Walnut	101	24	4,641
Central North Canadian	39	15	1,752
Muskogee-Oklmulgee	225	59	7,590
Northern Hughes	78	35	6,148
Harper County	74	20	6,522
Verdi-Grand	27	0	0
Checotah	45	9	820

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DISTRICT PROGRESS IN LOUISIANA LISTED

The eight operating soil conservation districts in Louisiana have entered into agreements with 970 farmers who control 185,975 acres, according to a summary made on December 1 by Guy Fletcher, state coordinator for the Soil Conservation Service in Louisiana.

At that time, 2,779 farmers who own 597,921 acres had applied to the supervisors of their respective districts for assistance in establishing conservation measures on their land.

When the report was made, plans were being prepared for the establishment of conservation measures on 130 farms covering 31,493 acres. Conservation surveys have been made on 567,754 acres.

Fourteen educational meetings, with a total attendance of 445 persons, were held in the Louisiana districts in November.

The Louisiana report by districts:

District	Requests for Assistance	Farms Under Agreement	Acres Under Agreement
Feliciana	220	103	34,469
D'Arbonne	552	231	34,073
Dorcheat	306	169	27,266
Upper Sabine	455	143	30,205
Upper West Red	232	67	21,336
Saline	523	158	26,226
Dugdemona	194	70	9,915
Bogue Chitto-Pearl River	297	29	2,483

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DISTRICT PROGRESS IN ARKANSAS

The number of acres under agreement with the 14 Arkansas soil conservation districts with which the Service is cooperating totaled 404,736 on the first of December, Glenn E. Riddell, state coordinator for the Soil Conservation Service in Arkansas, reported. This area represents 2,920 farms.

In addition, 138 farm plans, covering 18,243 acres, had been prepared and submitted to the farmers for signature. There were also 183 farm plans, for 27,300 acres, in process of preparation.

The districts conducted 87 educational meetings in November, with a total of 4,962 persons present. Besides, 18 meetings to consider planning and program execution were held with a total of 323 farmers.

On December 1, the conservation surveys had been completed on 2,456,458 acres in the Arkansas districts.

The organization of the King's River-Long Creek and the Moorefield Soil Conservation Districts in Arkansas has increased the number of districts in the state to 16.

The districts' report follows:

District	Total Number Agreements	Total Acreage Planned
Greene County-Crowley Ridge	225	23,339
Lower East Saline	235	29,294
Mine Creek	139	23,245
East Central Arkansas	482	61,796
Magazine	148	18,034
Poteau River	135	18,417
Tri-River	360	56,037
Illinois Bayou	205	20,862
Crooked Creek	293	39,545
Central Valleys	476	59,187
South Crowley Ridge	74	20,060
Terre Rouge Bodcaw	114	29,919
Fourche LaFave Petit Jean	27	3,459
Central Crowley Ridge	7	1,542

TEXAS AGRICULTURAL WORKERS WILL CONVENE IN DALLAS

"How Agricultural Agencies Are Meeting the New Situation" will be the theme of the thirteenth annual meeting of the Texas Agricultural Workers' Association when it convenes in Dallas January 12-13.

Approximately 40 state and national leaders in agriculture and home economics will appear on the program, including Dr. H. H. Bennett, Washington, D. C., Chief of the Soil Conservation Service.

The subjects of addresses and the speakers will be as follows:

"Training Agricultural and Home Economics Workers," Dean Margaret W. Weeks, dean of the School of Home Economics, Texas Technological College, Lubbock; "Agricultural Research," A. B. Conner, director, Texas Agricultural Experiment Station, College Station; "Spreading Agricultural Information in the Field," H. H. Williamson, director, Texas Extension Service, College Station; "Agricultural Planning," Dr. Bushrod Allin, head, Division of State and Local Planning, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, Washington, D. C.; "Physical Land Use," Dr. Bennett; "Rural Finance," Dr. W. W. Alexander, administrator, Farm Security Administration, Washington, D. C.; "Stabilizing Farm Income," R. M. Evans, administrator, Agricultural Adjustment Administration, Washington, D. C.; "Soil Conservation Districts," V. C. Marshall, Temple, chairman, State Soil Conservation Board.

Sectional meetings on horticulture, animal industries, conservation, agricultural economics, and the farm and ranch home will be conducted.

The annual distinguished service award to the Texan who has rendered the most notable service to the agricultural development of the State will be made at a banquet Friday evening, January 13.

Officers of the association are: Louis P. Merrill, regional conservator, Soil Conservation Service, president; Eugene Butler, editor, Progressive Farmer, vice president; Miss Maurine Hearn, district agent of the Texas A. & M. College, Extension Service, secretary, and W. O. Cox, director, Agricultural Department of the Houston Chamber of Commerce, treasurer.

TEXAS FARMERS SUBMIT 67 PETITIONS FOR DISTRICTS

Sixty-seven petitions asking for Texas soil conservation districts which would cover 52,654,000 acres had been received on December 14 by the State Soil Conservation Board, V. C. Marshall of Temple, board chairman, reported.

The State Board, after hearings and other investigation, has found that 60 of the proposed districts are needed. However, in several cases, two or more of these proposed districts have been combined to facilitate the treatment of land in the same problem areas. These combinations have reduced to 52 the number of districts thus far approved by the Board. These districts cover approximately 49,569,000 acres.

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CONSERVATION SPEAKERS FOR MEETING OF SOUTHERN
AGRICULTURAL WORKERS

Seven employees of the Soil Conservation Service will speak during sessions of the Soil Conservation Section of the Association of Southern Agricultural Workers when the association's annual meeting is held in Birmingham, Alabama, February 7, 8, and 9, J. W. Sargent, associate regional Conservator for the Soil Conservation Service in Region 4 and chairman of the Soil Conservation Section announced.

Speakers and their subjects are:

Dr. H. H. Bennett, Washington, D. C., Chief of the Service -
"Proper Land Use as Related to a Balanced Agriculture"

E. A. Norton, Washington, D. C., Chief, Division of Physical Surveys -
"Land Use Capabilities, Adaptation and Use"

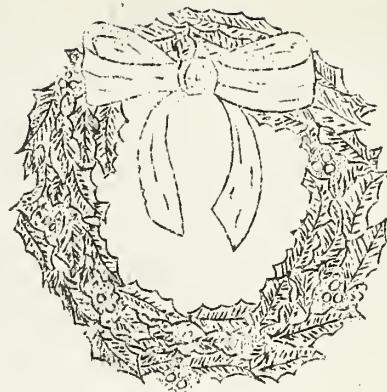
W. M. Hardy, acting state coordinator for Tennessee -
"Factors to be Considered in Working Out a Conservation Plan on an
Individual Farm"

M. W. Lowry and T. W. Webb of Spartanburg, S. C., Division of Project
Plans, Region 2 -
"Contribution of the Soil Conservation District to Better Land Use
in the South"

Paul H. Walser, College Station, Texas, state coordinator for Texas -
"Economic Feasibility of Conservation Practices"

Louis P. Merrill, Fort Worth, Texas, regional conservator, Region 4 -
"Long Time Aspects of the Soil Conservation Service Program"

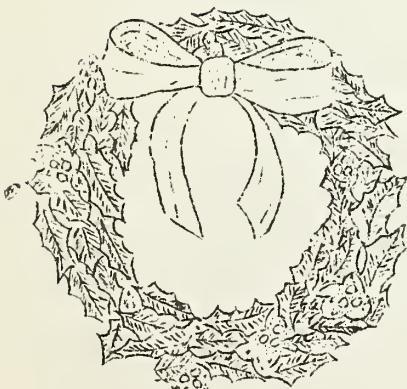
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REGIONAL CONSERVATOR'S HOLIDAY MESSAGE

I wish to take this means of extending to each member of the Service my appreciation for the accomplishments of the year now closing and to express sincere good wishes for a happy holiday season and success in the new year.

James W. Marshall



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